

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE

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AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY SUVA

S E C R E T MANILA 8023

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PLOS

SUBJECT: LOS-ARCHIPELAGOS

REF: CARACAS 6102

1. PRELIMINARY TO AMBASSADOR RAISING LOS ISSUE AT HIGHER LEVEL, POLITICAL COUNSELOR DISCUSSED REFTEL JULY 5 WITH SOLICITOR GENERAL MENDOZA GENERALLY COVERING POINTS SUGGESTED REFTEL. MENDOZA APPARENTLY UNINFORMED OF US-PHILIPPINE MEETING. DISCUSSION THAT FOLLOWED WAS CANDID BUT NON-COMMITTAL SINCE MENDOZA MADE CLEAR HE WAS NOT ATTEMPTING TO PREDICT GOP REACTION TO OUR DEMARCHE.

2. MENDOZA'S FIRST POINT WAS TO ASK WHETHER U.S. DELEGATION HAD YET TALKED WITH INDONESIAN DELEGATION. HE POINTED OUT THAT FIRST REQUIREMENT OF PHIL DELEGATION WAS TO TALK IN CARACAS WITH OTHER ARCHIPELAGO DELEGATIONS AND HE HAD NOT YET HEARD THAT CONSULTATIONS HAD TAKEN PLACE.

3. SECOND POINT WAS TO NOTE THAT PHILIPPINE CONSTITUTION VERY SPECIFICALLY DELINEATED NATIONAL TERRITORY. ANY CHANGE IN THE CONSTITUTION IN THIS RESPECT WOULD POSE DIFFICULT PROBLEM WHATEVER THE REASONS.

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4. HAVING MADE THESE POINTS, HE LAUNCHED INTO MORE GEN-

ERAL DISCUSSION OF ARCHIPELAGO CONCEPT AS SEEN BY GOP. BASIC QUESTION, HE SAID, WAS WHAT PHILIPPINES WOULD GAIN FROM INTERNATIONALLY ENDORSED BUT LIMITED ARCHIPELAGO OVER ARCHIPELAGO DEFINED BY TERRITORIAL SEAS AND OTHER INTERNATIONALLY ENDORSED ATTRIBUTES SUCH AS ECONOMIC ZONE. IF ARGUMENT WERE POSED ON BASIS OF 3 MILE TERRITORIAL SEA, HE SAID, THERE WAS NO QUESTION PHILIPPINES STOOD TO GAIN A GREAT DEAL FROM INTERNATIONALLY ENDORSED ARCHIPELAGO. SINCE IT IS LIKELY CONFERENCE WILL ENDORSE TWELVE MILE TERRITORIAL SEA, HOWEVER, THE ADVANTAGES BECOME FAR LESS APPARENT. SOLICITOR GENERAL'S OWN WORK WITH TWELVE MILE TERRITORIAL SEA ON PHILIPPINE ARCHIPELAGO HAS PERSUADED HIM THAT WITH EXCEPTION OF SOME PARTS OF SULU SEA THE PHILIPPINE ARCHIPELAGO WILL BE EFFECTIVELY ENCLOSED ANYWAY. PHILIPPINES WILL THEREBY HAVE CONTROL OVER ALMOST ALL WATERS OF ITS ARCHIPELAGO WITHOUT ANY OF COMPROMISES INVOLVED IN U.S. PROPOSAL. AT SAME TIME, LIKELY ENDORSEMENT BY CONFERENCE OF ECONOMIC ZONE EVEN AS LIMITED AS ONE HUNDRED MILES WOULD GIVE PHILIPPINES ADEQUATE INSURANCE OVER CONTROL OF ITS RESOURCES. MENDOZA CONCLUDED BY NOTING THAT PROBLEM MIGHT BE DIFFERENT FOR ARCHIPELAGO LIKE FIJI BUT STRUCTURE OF PHILIPPINES ARGUED AGAINST U.S. APPROACH.

5. POLITICAL COUNSELOR ACKNOWLEDGED THAT ONLY PHILIPPINES COULD DECIDE ADVANTAGES OR DISADVANTAGES OF U.S. PROPOSAL. HE SUGGESTED IN APPRAISING ADVANTAGES, HOWEVER, THAT PHILIPPINES CONSIDER (A) LAST CHANCE OPPORTUNITY OF GETTING INTERNATIONALLY ESTABLISHED ARCHIPELAGO CONCEPT AT CARACAS; (2) DESIRABILITY OF MOVING AWAY FROM POSSIBLY CONTENTIOUS AREA OF HAVING TO ESTABLISH SOVEREIGNTY UNILATERALLY ON BASIS OF TERRITORIAL SEA MEASUREMENTS AROUND ISLANDS THAT COULD BE DISPUTED; (3) PRACTICABILITY OF DISCUSSING SECURITY CONCERNS IN MORE DETAIL WITH U.S. TO ATTEMPT TO DETERMINE THEIR MANAGABILITY.

6. MENDOZA CONFIRMED DEPARTURE JULY 14 AND ARRIVAL CARACAS ON ABOUT JULY 18 TO REMAIN UNTIL MID-AUGUST. HE NOTED AGAIN ALTERNATE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HIMSELF AND JUSTICE SECRETARY ABAD SANTOS. SINCE ECONOMIC TALKS ARE ABOUT TO

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BEGIN WITH GOP, HIS PRESENCE HERE DURING NEXT WEEK IS IN ANY EVENT OF CRITICAL IMPORTANCE TO EMBASSY.

SULLIVAN

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Message Attributes

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